



Danny Winek
Boys Cross Country

When did you start playing your sport/get introduced to it?

I started running in middle school with the Crone cross country team and realized that I had a strong talent for the sport. In turn, I joined the Naperville Track Club in eighth grade, where I qualified for nationals with the team. The experience I had as a member of that program really drew my interest to the sport and lead me to join Neuqua's team.

Do you play any other sports?

I played football, baseball, basketball, and soccer throughout much of elementary school. I continued to play basketball until I found my interest in running. I still play baseball and basketball recreationally.

What has your sport taught you/what lessons have you pulled from it?

Cross country has taught me the benefits of strong work ethic, time management, and determination. Successful runners must be able to efficiently manage their time when it comes to school work, practice, and recovery, including sleep, and all three must be done to perfection in order to gain the most from training. It has also taught me the importance of determination; after missing my entire junior year, I was able to get back with the team and contribute to our state trophy.

What do you wish you knew when you were just starting?

I wish I knew the influence that doing all the little things, such as nutrition and sleep, outside of practice has on the eventual success of myself as a runner. I didn't fully commit to doing these until my senior year and I know that I would have had more overall success, had I worked to do them.

What quote/inspiration do you resort to when things get really hard?

When things start to get challenging, I remember H. Jackson Brown's quote, "*the best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.*" It reminds me that everything that I have done up to this point has prepared me extremely well for today, because today is yesterday's tomorrow.

Share something about you that isn't well known.

In a typical week, I eat at Chipotle three times, always with a chicken burrito bowl. Additionally, my largest superstition is that I must have Chipotle as my dinner the night before any cross country or track meet.

Where do you go from here? College plans?

After high school, I hope to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Illinois, University of Wisconsin, University of California-Berkeley, or the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, while also being a member of their cross country and track teams.

Do you have a role model?

My most influential role models are both of my parents. They are incredibly supportive of everything I do, and they work to bring out the best in me and provide me with unequivocal potential to excel in every aspect of life. I truly wouldn't be where I am today without them, and I look up to them more than anyone.